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Housekeepers' Chat

Wednesday, November 19, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "A Sunshine Package for a New Baby." Suggestions approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.S.D. Menu for children.

Bulletin available:

---ooOoo---

I heard of something new the other day, and it sounded so nice I want to pass it right on to my radio friends. It's a 'sunshine package', which you send to the mother of a brand new baby.

You have it all ready by the time the baby arrives. It consists of ten-or any convenient number-of tiny packages for the little newcomer, one to be opened up each day. Something to look forward to, don't you see, during the long waits when no visitors are allowed at the hospital- something to talk with the nurses about- and a constant reminder of the affectionate thoughtfulness of the person who prepared it. Don't you think it's a fine idea?

I'll tell you what was in the 'sunshine package' I happened to see. Each little article was wrapped in tissue paper, tied with pink or blue ribbon, and numbered on a tag. Some of the gifts were larger and more expensive than others; some were homemade and some were bought. They were so skillfully chosen that nothing was superfluous, no matter what else the young mother had.

Package number one was a crocheted sacque. Can't have too many of those, in assorted sizes. Number two was a lap pad consisting of a flannelette square with a loosely attached rubber lining. Good thing for the mother to use when she holds the baby- those few times when she may hold it,- to protect her own clothing.

Then came a little dress-year-old size, this one was,- a good choice because the mother already had plenty of wee ones; a package containing three kinds of small safety pins,- pink, blue, and white, a plain hemstitched pillow cover for the carriage was next. Of course modern babies don't have pillows in their baskets or cribs. Number six contained two bibs,- one for dress-up, all embroidery and lace, the other soft and quilted- for more practical purposes. When the baby begins to teeth the mother will be glad of these. A little embroidered petticoat, just right to wear with the year-old dress, was the seventh surprise. Just now the baby doesn't want petticoats, probably, but later on there will be occasions when he must look his very best.

A pair of gold baby pins will always be useful. And a soft, large, bath square of terry cloth. For the tenth and last package, the thoughtful

friend chose a yard of double faced white eiderdown, and crocheted a shell patterned edge around it- all ready to take the baby home!

Don't you agree with me that the sunshine package was a delightful gift? I don't see why the same idea could not be carried out in other ways for anyone confined to a hospital or a sick room,- a collection of useful or amusing little articles to be opened one at a time. And for a child's Christmas,- why not plan a big box containing perhaps seven small packages, one for each day between Christmas and New Year's? This would distribute some of the Christmas fun through the holidays. It would remove part of the confusion of many new toys and possessions from the child. Wouldn't it really give him more pleasure than having so much at once that nothing is fully appreciated?

I'm going to try it myself this year, with the Christmas gifts for some of my friends' small children.

Speaking of 'sunshine packages' once more, however, I must tell you what Mrs. Carpenter thought I meant. You know Mrs. Carpenter, whom I mention so often in my talks, because she specializes in child nutrition.

She thought I was talking about a package of cod-liver oil! And that was quite natural, of course, because she believes so strongly that all babies should be accustomed from their earliest infancy to having "bottled sunshine" given them in wintertime.

"Aunt Sammy", she said to me at our last meeting, "I do wish you'd emphasize in your talks the fact that if babies are accustomed to the taste of cod-liver oil from the very first, they usually like it. Being un-prejudiced, and too young to be finicky, they usually like it very much. Then it never becomes necessary to disguise the taste of it with orange juice or other flavors. Baby specialists say that cod-liver oil should be given to every baby throughout the first two years of its life, beginning at 2 weeks of age, whether he is breast fed or artificially fed."

I have a menu for the children today- the children who are just a little older, who are able to feed themselves and carry their own trays if necessary to help mother. Here it is:

Scalloped Lamb; Peas; Hot Baked Apples; Graham Bread; Old-fashioned Creamy Pudding. The scalloped lamb is made with a white sauce, and there's plenty of milk in the rice pudding, but the child has some milk to drink, too, at all his meals.

Thursday: Bringing the Kitchen up to Date.

